



# CANCER: A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO PREVENTION AND CONTROL

## WHAT IS THE PUBLIC HEALTH PROBLEM?

- Cancer is the second leading cause of death in the United States, exceeded only by heart disease.
- One of every 4 deaths in the United States is from cancer. In 2002, 555,500 Americans will die of cancer—more than 1,500 people a day.
- The overall annual cost of cancer in the United States is \$156 billion in direct and indirect costs.
- Cancer is largely controllable through prevention, early detection and treatment. Over the past decade, state health departments, working with the federal government, have developed cancer registries and cancer programs targeting such cancers as breast, cervical, skin, prostate and colorectal.

## WHAT HAS CDC ACCOMPLISHED?

CDC currently supports many state cancer registries and many state cancer prevention and control programs, including those for breast and cervical cancer, skin cancer and colorectal cancer. These categorical programs have made enormous strides in their own areas, but have lacked a comprehensive, coordinated focus. To begin to build a coordinated focus for cancer efforts at the state level, CDC funded the development of comprehensive cancer control programs for 5 states and an Indian health board. These programs will build the foundation for a nationwide, comprehensive cancer control program. Comprehensive cancer programs integrate the full range of cancer prevention activities, including research, evaluation, health education and communication, program development, public policy development, surveillance and clinical services. By integrating these activities, health agencies use limited resources more efficiently, improve community-based education and health promotion, share expertise and effectively target at-risk populations.

*Example of program in action:* With support from CDC, North Carolina's State Health Department and the NC State Legislative Cancer Council have been able to increase comprehensive cancer control efforts. Activities include developing and implementing a statewide Nutrition Challenge Campaign, developing professional education resources to promote colorectal cancer screening, developing an awareness campaign related to the importance of clinical trials for cancer prevention and control, enhancing youth tobacco control efforts and designing a comprehensive evaluation plan.

## WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS?

CDC plans to support comprehensive cancer control programs in more health agencies. Approximately 20 states have developed comprehensive cancer plans, but lack the resources necessary to carry out their plans. CDC will continue to offer informational technical support and tools to assist these and other states with the development and implementation of comprehensive cancer control plans.

*For further information about this and other CDC programs, visit [www.cdc.gov/programs](http://www.cdc.gov/programs).*

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